GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4182
ANSWERED ON:21.04.2005
CLASSICAL LANGUAGES
Murmu Shri Rupchand

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the languages which have been declared as classical languages;

(b) the criteria being followed to declare a language as classical language;

(c) whether the Government has any proposal to declare 'Santali' language as a classical language; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER FOR INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE(SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) Government have declared Tamil as classical language.

(b) The following criteria will be used to determine the eligibility of languages to be considered for classification as a 'classical languages': -

(i) High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a thousand years.

(ii) A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.

(iii) The Literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community.

(iv) The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.

(c) No sir.

(d) Does not arise.